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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6246  
INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 7097  
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 8812  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 8970  
RUEHCN/AMCONSUL CHENGDU 2019  
RUEHGZ/AMCONSUL GUANGZHOU 0444  
RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 8345  
RUEHGH/AMCONSUL SHANGHAI 1266  
RUEHSH/AMCONSUL SHENYANG 5989  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC  
RUCPDOC/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC  
RUEHC/USDA FAS WASHDC 2660  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC  
RHHMUNA/USPACOM HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TAIPEI 001740

SIPDIS

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STATE ALSO FOR EAP/TC  
USTR FOR STRATFORD AND ALTBACH  
TREASURY FOR OASIA/TTYANG  
USDA FOR FAS/OCRA/ASIA RADLER, HIGGISTON, AND BEILLARD  
USDA FOR FAS/OSTA HAMILTON AND MAGINNIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/03/2032

TAGS: ECON ETRD EAGR PGOV PREL KIPR TW  
SUBJECT: DIRECTOR YOUNG ENLISTS HELP OF LY SPEAKER WANG ON  
RACTOPAMINE ISSUE

REF: TAIPEI 1660

Classified By: Director Stephen M. Young, Reason(s): 1.4 (B/D).

¶1. (C) Summary: Legislative Yuan (LY) Speaker Wang Jin-pyng (KMT) told the Director on July 31 that he understood U.S. objections to Taiwan's "zero tolerance" policy toward ractopamine use, and promised consult with other Taiwan officials, including Vice Premier Chiou I-jen and Council of Agriculture Chairman Su Jia-chyuan, to seek a solution. The Director stressed that U.S. regulations on ractopamine parallel the draft UN-affiliated CODEX and WHO standards accepted by Australia, Japan, and Korea. Taiwan should reconsider its ban on ractopamine, and in the meantime, the Director suggested, Taiwan should temporarily adopt the CODEX standard to allow U.S. pork shipments to continue. Wang agreed that Taiwan's goal should be to reach a reasonable standard toward ractopamine use. End Summary.

¶2. (C) The Director told Wang that he had met with Vice Premier Chiou I-jen the preceding day (July 30) to discuss the ractopamine problem, and that Chiou had suggested that the Director meet with Wang, who enjoyed good relations with Taiwan's farmers. Wang appeared somewhat surprised by this recommendation, and told the Director that he had not spoken personally with anyone from the pig farmers' lobby. Therefore, he did not have a clear understanding of the nature of the dispute. Wang acknowledged that he was on good terms with many farm industry leaders, but denied having any special influence with them. He indicated that the Executive Yuan is responsible for decisions on these issues.

¶3. (C) The Director explained that U.S. pig farmers had been using ractopamine for nearly ten years to produce leaner pork. The UN-affiliated CODEX and WHO have also approved the use of ractopamine for lean pork production. In the U.S., the Director continued, ractopamine use is strictly regulated by the FDA and USDA. Under U.S. regulations, only minute

traces of the drug will be tolerated in pork destined for human consumption. Other countries in the region, including Australia, Japan and Korea, have accepted ractopamine as safe, using the UN and CODEX regimes. Taiwan's decision to adopt a "zero tolerance" policy toward ractopamine and other feed additives contradicts world food safety standards, and is not supported by science. If the matter is not resolved quickly, the Director cautioned, it could damage overall trade relations between the U.S. and Taiwan. The Director asked for Wang's help in convincing Taiwan officials to harmonize Taiwan's food safety policies with those accepted by the international community.

¶14. (C) Wang told the Director that before speaking to other government officials, he would first need to understand the basis for Taiwan's "zero tolerance" policy, and compare it to the FDA, UN and WHO standards. The Director urged Wang to act quickly, to limit potential damage to the U.S.-Taiwan trade relationship. Taiwan officials should already understand the U.S. and international food safety standards governing ractopamine use, he added, since Taiwan had been accepting U.S. and other countries' pork imports for years. U.S. pork producers continually have shipments inbound to Taiwan, and an embargo would cause significant losses. Taiwan must act quickly to rationalize its policies to prevent this outcome. In the meantime, the Director urged that, while Taiwan revisits its own ractopamine policy, it should temporarily adopt the CODEX standard on ractopamine, to allow U.S. pork shipments to continue. Wang agreed that Taiwan's goal should be to reach a reasonable standard toward ractopamine use.

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¶15. (C) Wang promised to speak directly with Vice Premier Chiou I-jen and Department of Health (DOH) Minister Hou Sheng-mao. The Director agreed that Wang should speak with Chiou, but urged Wang to meet with Council of Agriculture Chairman Su Jia-chyuan, instead of DOH Minister Hou, who might be unwilling to cooperate for fear of increased public criticism. Wang agreed, and promised to contact the Director in the coming days to keep him informed.  
YOUNG